



# TRS Plan 1 Rules for State Elected Officials

## Washington State Department of Retirement Systems

The following rules apply to TRS Plan 1 members who are elected to statewide office. Additional rules governing all TRS Plan 1 members are summarized in the TRS Plan 1 Member Handbook.

### **You must continue your participation in TRS Plan 1 while in office if:**

- You were elected to statewide office (includes election to the state legislature), and
- You were a TRS 1 member when elected to office.

### **When can I apply for membership?**

Your TRS 1 membership will continue automatically when your employer begins reporting your elected official service.

If you serve an additional term of office with the same employer without a break in service, you will remain a retirement system member.

### **How much service credit will I earn?**

The amount of service credit you accumulate helps to determine the size of your retirement benefit. "Service credit" is based on the number of days of compensated employment reported by your employer for each fiscal year. As a state elected official, you will earn:

- **A full year of service credit** if you receive compensation for at least four-fifths - 144 days - of the 180-day school year, provided that contributions have been made to TRS
- **A fractional year's service credit** for working less than four-fifths of a fiscal year. No service credit will be granted for less than 20 days of service within a fiscal year.

Service in any state elected position is considered full-time service. Thus for each full year of legislative service, you are eligible to receive one year of service credit.

### **What will my retirement benefit be?**

Your retirement benefit will be calculated using the following formula:

$$2\% \times \text{service credit year} \times \text{average final compensation} / 12 \text{ months} = \text{Monthly benefit}$$

**Average Final Compensation (AFC)** is the average earnable compensation for your two consecutive highest-paid fiscal years.

Your retirement benefit can be no more than 60% of your AFC.

**Legislators and Earnable Compensation:** If you take an unpaid leave of absence to serve in the state legislature and serve for five or more years, your earnable compensation will be the salary you would have earned in the position you left. You must make employee contributions on your earnable compensation. Employer contributions are not required.

# **TRS Plan 1 Membership Rules for Local Elected Officials (continued)**

## **Washington State Department of Retirement Systems**

### **How much will I contribute to my retirement fund?**

During your service as a state elected official, you will contribute 7.5 percent of your "compensation earnable" each month to your retirement plan. You will contribute 6% for service rendered in non-elected positions. Compensation earnable is the salary and wages you earn during a payroll period for service rendered.

### **If I am retired when elected, can I remain retired?**

If you are a retired TRS 1 member who is elected to office, you have the option of remaining retired and continuing to receive your retirement allowance while serving in office, or returning to active member status while serving in office.

If you return to active member status, you will stop receiving a monthly retirement benefit, and you will resume making contributions to your retirement system and accumulating service credit. Any retirement benefit you receive during your current term must be repaid.

### **Can I retire from TRS 1 and continue serving in elected office?**

You may retire from active membership and begin receiving monthly benefits while continuing to serve in elected office. To do so, you must waive claim to any future service credit that would have been earned while in office.

### **Questions?**

To discuss the application of these rules to your specific case, call DRS's Central Reception Desk and ask to speak to the Legislative and Legal Services Unit.

DRS's central telephone number is toll free 1-800-547-6657 or locally (360) 664-7000.

Office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except legal holidays.

### **THIS PUBLICATION IS A SUMMARY**

This brochure does not contain a complete description of the law. If there are conflicts between the information contained in this brochure and retirement law, the applicable law will govern.

This publication is available in alternate formats. For information contact DRS Member Communications at (360) 664-7278.